

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
REVOLUTION SOCIETY,
AGAINST
THE CALUMNIES
OF
MR. BURKE.

BY A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTION SOCIETY.

L O N D O N:

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1792.

REVOLUTION

REVOLUTION SOCIETY

THE COMMITTEE

FOR THE

REDEMPTION OF THE

PEOPLE OF THE

UNITED STATES

VINDICATION

OF THE

REVOLUTION SOCIETY, &c.

HOW much soever the nation might applaud, as it is well known it universally did, thirty or forty years ago, the principles of the glorious Revolution, enthusiastically pronouncing its emphatic name, it cannot but be observed, that it now seems to be the fashion of the times, set, as other fashions generally are, by the court, to ridicule and pervert its principles; and not only to vilify, but to endeavour to obliterate its very name from the

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memory of all. The word, Revolution, being alarming to men of arbitrary dispositions, because of the principles and spirit of liberty commemorated, and of the grand precedent, established by that in 1688; which the real friends of order and government, on the other hand, wish may be ever before the eyes of those, who are entrusted with power; that acknowledging, according to its principles, the justice and necessity of a change of governments and constitutions, whenever the force, or the corrupting influence of monarchy, tends to the destruction of liberty, they may, with a wise affright, take care, that other Revolutions are not made necessary by their *misconduct**; which will inevitably be the case, if depending on an indefeasible hereditary right, they should affect to hold their govern-

* The harshest terms might be justifiably used to mark the criminality of a king, who should endeavour to subvert a free constitution. When it is expressed by the word *misconduct*, as it was by the late Dr. Price, it manifests a moderation and tenderness towards the character of royal offenders; and yet Mr. Burke cavilled at it, without recollecting that Blackstone, who never affected to be an Old Whig, marks by the use of it the disloyalty of King James towards his people, "in breaking the original contract," &c. when he says, B. I. Cap. 3, that "the Convention held that this *misconduct* amounted to an endeavour to subvert the Constitution."

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ment in *contempt* of their people, and thereby render it somewhat more than contemptible to them.

As it is the fashion of the times to reprobate the principle and spirit by which the Revolution was brought about, it is not surprising, that the characters and conduct of the great actors in that glorious scene, and of all who hold it in admiration, should have been, and still are, calumniated by the boldest assertions, dictated by fallacy and falsehood. An ecclesiastical author*, who has been more rewarded in our time, than Sacheverel was in his day, having asserted, "that the principles of freedom were professed and publickly avowed in 1688, only to serve a turn, and not because they came from the heart, or were entertained on any just ground of conviction:" and evidence, such as it is, having been produced by others, to prove†, that the noble families to which the nation ever considered itself as highly indebted for the enjoyment of its present constitution, acted meanly and treacherously to the people, who had confided in them; and ungratefully and traiterously to

* The Bishop of Worcester, in his two Dialogues on the English Government.

† Dalrymple and Macpherson.

the prince, whom they had invited hither, as their deliverer from despotism. In short, endeavours have been used, to the shame of the times, and to which, it is said, too much countenance has been given from a quarter we should least have expected it, to shew, that the Revolution was a most unprincipled and villainous transaction on the part of all concerned therein.

This disposition in the times to render the cause of liberty unpopular, and to repress its spirit, wherever it may appear, having been remarked by one, who confesses, He has some little desire of the honours, distinctions, and emoluments of a court, gave occasion to the publication of his famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France; and on the Proceedings of certain Societies in London*. In the course of which performance the author, carrying his arrogance somewhat farther than the contemptible speech-maker of his day, James I. affects to be the great political schoolmaster, not of this land alone, but likewise of a neighbouring kingdom, and indeed of the whole world; and, as such, lays down principles, which, if adopted in this country, must render monarchy as odious to the people under the present family, as it became under the Stuarts, to the ruin of that house; for, under pretence of guard-

guarding the constitution against innovation, doctrines of such a mischievous nature are maintained, that if they had universally prevailed at the times of the Reformation and Revolution, and are essentially just and true, those great events, on which our civil and religious liberties are founded, could not, and indeed ought not, to have taken place, and may now be constitutionally overturned ; and, what is of greater consequence to some, the House of Brunswick could never have been elected to the throne of these kingdoms, and ought to be set aside.

It is not necessary to dwell, at this time, on the general system of this dogmatical school-master. He has already been severely scourged, as many others, equally unprincipled with himself, deserve to be, by the animated and well-instructed friends of liberty ; and even, publicly in parliament, by one of his own scholars, and that most properly with his own rods ; in the midst of which appears the *fascies* (the 6th of Queen Anne) for the capital punishment of those who traiterously deny the sovereignty of the people, to appoint and limit the succession to the crown to whom, and in whatever manner, they please.

It may not, however, be improper to take some notice of his attack on the Revolution Society ;

Society ; urged as it is with an insolence and rancour unbecoming a man of the least liberality of mind, for the purpose of provoking the resentment of administration against them, as the declared and inveterate enemies of the constitution, and the family on the throne.

It is well known, that the pretence which has excited this attack, is founded on the congratulatory address of the Society to the National Assembly, " On the prospect that their revolution gave to the two first kingdoms in the world, of a common participation in the blessings of civil and religious Liberty ; and on the tendency of the glorious example given in France, has to introduce a general reformation in the governments of Europe, and thereby make the *world free and happy*."—How any man could have taken offence at such a congratulation, appears almost inconceivable. It might have been thought that the subject of this correspondence would have justified, or at least have excused any defect or impropriety, if such could be discovered, in its mode. *The author of the Reflections, &c.* is of a different opinion. He condemns and reprobates, with a virulence peculiar to himself, the whole of the correspondence, because of its mode ; however liberal and humane the object of it is in itself, and by consequence

consequence worthy of every Englishman, and honorable to the nation at large.

For, arrogantly, and therefore ridiculously, setting himself up as a pattern to the world, He says, * “ Not having a general apostolical mission, being a citizen of a particular state, and being bound in a considerable degree by its public will, I should think it, at least, improper and irregular for *me* to open a formal public correspondence with the actual government of a foreign state, without the express authority of the government under which I live, and under any thing like an equivocal description, which to many, unacquainted with our usages, might make the address, in which I joined, appear as the act of a person in some sort of corporate capacity.

“ Their signatures (those of the members of the society) ought in *my* opinion to have been annexed to their instrument. The world would then have the means of knowing how many they are ; who they are ; and of what value their opinions may be, from their personal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, or their lead and authority in the state.

“ To *me*, who am but a PLAIN MAN, the proceeding looks a little too refined, and too

* Reflections, p. 6.

ingenious ; it has too much the air of a political stratagem, adopted for the sake of giving, under a high-sounding name, an importance to the public declarations of this Club, which, when the matter came to be closely inspected, they did not altogether so well deserve—it is a policy, that has very much the complexion of a fraud.

“ I must be tolerably *sure*, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have *really* received one.—The effect of liberty to individuals is, they may do what they please ; we ought to see what they will please to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints.—Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the *use*, which is made of power ; and particularly of so trying a thing, as *new* power in *new* persons, of whose principles, tempers and dispositions, they have little or no experience ; and in situations, where those, who appear the most stirring in the scene, may possibly not be the real movers.”

Such are the offences, which occurred to the author of the *Reflections*, in the first moments of his rage against the Revolution Society, on account of their congratulatory address: offences which he has since worked up to the highest degree of criminality, and urged

urged against them with the utmost presumption in his own stability and rectitude; political knowledge and patriotism.

There are, however, those, who might be inclined to smile at seeing such charges brought against any man, or any body of men, by the author of the *Reflections*, who now snuffs up the incense offered to him by the turbulent priests of France, and applauds the refractory conduct of *his few* graduates at Oxford; in opening a formal correspondence with him, not only without the express authority, but in direct opposition, and in a most insulting manner, to the academic government under which they live; and the more so, as the whole of his publication is an outrage on the actual government of a foreign nation; an outrage which he was certainly not authorized to commit; and therefore he presumptuously asserts, in order to give an importance to his work, it was done agreeably to the general sense and sentiments of the nation; though for the doing of far less the poor printer Luxford still groans in prison; and Lord George Gordon is, as our author exultingly says, yet a tenant of Newgate. But the conduct of this calumniator of the Revolution Society must appear still more ridiculous to those, who credit the report, that, *he*, this

citizen of a particular state, did not think it improper and irregular in him to open a formal correspondence, during the American contest, with Doctor Franklin, the representative of the American states, at that time at war with, and in open revolt against, this country: a correspondence which, having been forbidden as traiterous, so far from being warranted by the express authority of the state, must have been carried on in direct violation of its declared and well-known will, and therefore treasonable in the highest degree.

The Society, however, rest not their defence on the graceless conduct of their accuser; they appeal to their correspondence itself, which has been carefully kept out of sight by its vilifier, in order to give free course to his malignity. Had it been brought forward, he could not have dared to have clamoured against it, as objectionable in its mode, or in its style of expression, and much less, as being offensive to the state with respect to its matter. These objections might indeed have been raised against it, had the Society ventured to declare, in the language of royalty, *Ex certâ scientiâ, et mero motu*, the sense of the whole people of England; this would have been considered by him an unwarrantable presumption in them; and a political stratagem, adopted in order to
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give importance to their resolutions. If they had stood forth as the oratorical defenders of the clergy of France, which nothing less than an Apostolical mission could have warranted, their religious principles, as protestants, might have been questioned, as would those even of his Majesty, should he, who is at the head of the church of England, assume the title, and become *Defensor fidei, et majestatis ecclesiae Gallicae*.

Had their correspondence affected the flourishes of rhetoric, and abounded in fantastic and diffusive declamation, it would certainly have manifested, in the opinion of every man of literature, a want of practice in, and a thorough ignorance of, the genuine simplicity of the epistolary style; and Mr. Burke himself, as the author of the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, would have told them, if their declamation had been stuffed with similitudes, comparisons, metaphors and allegories, that they, like the most ignorant and barbarous nations, who frequently excel in them, had shewn (as is usual with those whose "*genius is not constituted*") a weakness and backwardness in distinguishing and sorting their ideas—That there are many descriptions in the poets and orators, which owe their sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled, as to make it impossible to

attend to exact coherence and agreement of the allusions, which we should require in any other composition; (especially, it might be added, in the epistolary style)—That the aim of grandeur, by a profusion of excellent things, will produce nothing but a splendid disorder and confusion, without magnificence or use, in any work of genius; however it may succeed in certain fireworks*.

But, moreover, the author of the *Reflections* might have maintained with great reason, that the correspondence of the Society was highly offensive, and indeed detestable, for its matter, as most immoral and irreligious, however authorised it might be, if it had advised the Queen of France to kill herself in any circumstances whatever; or had recommended, from convenience or necessity, the murder of the king. But with how much more reason might it have been reprobated, had it been evidently entered into expressly for the purpose of exciting all the horrors of civil war in France, and to provoke a general combination among the powers of Europe to invade that country, as inhabited merely by atheists and assassins; and had called on them to wage war against, and extirpate them as such, not in any mode of civilized hostility, but of mutual military

* Introduction on Taste, and Section on Magnificence.

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execution, and universal carnage; of retaliation and revenge: wherein the hell-hounds of war are on all sides to be let loose, uncoupled, and unmuzzled*?

Had this been the nature of the correspondence in question, the Society ought not only to be expelled the state, but execrated by all mankind, as being most unprincipled, ferocious and inhuman. This, however, was certainly not the object of their congratulatory address. It was in every respect of a different nature from the correspondence which has been held by their bold calumniator, as will appear most evidently and most satisfactorily to every generous Englishman, from the following authentic documents; the perusal of which, it is trusted, will sufficiently justify, in the opinion of every man of candour, the principles and proceedings of the Revolution Society, so much outraged by Mr. Burke in all his late political publications.

AT the Anniversary Meeting of the Society for commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain, held at the London Tavern, Nov. 4. 1789, Dr. Price moved, and it was unanimously

* Vide Burke's Letter to a Member of the National Assembly,

resolved,

resolved, That the following Congratulatory Address to the National Assembly of France, be transmitted to them, signed by the Chairman:

‘ The Society for commemorating the Revolution in GREAT BRITAIN, disdaining national partialities, and rejoicing in every triumph of liberty and justice over arbitrary power, offer to the National Assembly of FRANCE their congratulations on the Revolution in that country, and on the prospect it gives to the two first kingdoms in the world, of a common participation in the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

‘ They cannot help adding their ardent wishes of a happy settlement of so important a Revolution, and at the same time expressing the particular satisfaction, with which they reflect on the tendency of the glorious example given in FRANCE to encourage other nations to assert the unalienable rights of mankind, and thereby to introduce a general reformation in the governments of EUROPE, and to make the world free and happy.’

In pursuance of the resolution of the Society, this Congratulatory Address was conveyed to the Duke of Rochefoucauld at Paris, with a letter requesting him to present it to the National

tional Assembly; and at the same time intimating, that the Society considered the National Assembly as acting for the world as well as for the great kingdom it represented, and therefore hoped that their Address was not an improper intrusion; or, if it was, that it would be excused, as an effusion of zeal in the cause of liberty and human happiness, which no considerations of impropriety had been able to suppress.

The following communications and letters will shew how highly the Society has been gratified by the favourable reception of its Address.

Extract from a Letter of the Duke de Rochefoucauld to Dr. Price.—Dated Paris, December 2d 1789.

‘ It belonged to——Dr. Price to propose a
 ‘ motion tending to pay to liberty the fairest
 ‘ homage, that of national prejudices.—The
 ‘ address of congratulation which Earl Stan-
 ‘ hope has done the Duke de la Rochefoucauld
 ‘ the honour to transmit to him, has been re-
 ‘ ceived by the National Assembly with lively
 ‘ applause. They have seen in that address
 ‘ the dawn of a glorious day, in which two
 ‘ nations who have always esteemed one ano-
 ‘ ther, notwithstanding their political divisions,
 ‘ and

and the diversity of their governments, shall
 contract an intimate union, founded on the
 similarity of their opinions and their common
 enthusiasm for liberty.—They have directed
 their President to write to Earl Stanhope;
 but the multiplicity of the business of the
 Presidency not having yet permitted the ex-
 pediting of that letter, the Duke de la Roche-
 foucauld has not delayed to do himself the
 honour of writing to Dr. Price. Happy in
 having been chosen for such an honourable
 commission, he rendered an account of it to
 the National Assembly; and, in presenting
 to them the address of a Society, whose ob-
 ject is so noble and patriotic, he has ac-
 quainted them with the claim which it has
 to their esteem, and to the esteem of the
 whole French nation, &c. &c.

*Extract from the Votes of the National Assembly of
 France.—Transmitted by the Archbishop of
 Aix.*

Wednesday, the 25th Nov. 1789.

A MEMBER having read a Congratulatory
 Address of the *English Society* called the *Re-
 volution Society*; the Assembly, deeply affected
 with this extraordinary proof of esteem, ex-
 pressed its satisfaction by loud applause, and
 resolved that the President be directed to
 write a letter to Lord Stanhope, Chairman of
 the

‘ the Society, expressing the lively and deep
 ‘ sensibility with which the National Assembly
 ‘ of France received the Address of the Revo-
 ‘ lution Society in England, which breathes
 ‘ those sentiments of humanity and universal
 ‘ benevolence, that ought to unite together,
 ‘ in all countries of the world, the true friends
 ‘ of liberty and the happiness of mankind.

(Signed)

THE ARCHBISHOP of AIX,
 President of the National Assembly.

*Sealed with the Arms
 of the National Assembly of France.*

(Counter-Signed)

THE VIS. DE MIRÆBEAU,
 Secretary.

SALOMON DE LA SAUGERIE,
 Secretary.

*Letter from the Archbishop of Aix, President of
 the National Assembly, to Earl Stanhope,
 Chairman of the Revolution Society.*

Paris, the 5th December, 1789.

‘ IT is worthy, my Lord, of a celebrated
 ‘ Society, and of an happy and free people, to
 ‘ interest themselves in the progress of public
 ‘ liberty and happiness.

‘ The French nation has long been improv-
 ‘ ing in knowledge and arts ; and its govern-
 ‘ ment was directed by opinions derived from
 ‘ them, even before the country governed
 ‘ itself by the laws, which they dictated.

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‘ The nation pursued with ardour useful
‘ truths, and daily diffusing light over every
‘ branch of the administration, it appeared to
‘ be carried, as by an universal impulse, to
‘ those changes, which now give it strength
‘ and stability.

‘ A king, whom we may call the best of men,
‘ and the first of citizens, encouraged by his
‘ virtues the hopes of the nation, and now, by
‘ universal concurrence, a durable constitution
‘ is established, founded on the unalienable
‘ rights of men and citizens.

‘ It undoubtedly belongs to our age, in
‘ which reason and liberty are extending
‘ themselves together, to extinguish for ever
‘ national hatred and rivalry.

‘ We must not allow the prejudices, which
‘ disgrace nations, to produce wars, those errors
‘ of governments. But the two most enlight-
‘ ened people of Europe ought to shew, by
‘ their example, that the love of their country
‘ is perfectly compatible with every sentiment
‘ of humanity.

‘ The National Assembly discovers, in the
‘ Address of the Revolution Society of Eng-
‘ land, those principles of universal benevo-
‘ lence, which ought to bind together, in all
‘ countries of the world, the true friends to
‘ the happiness and liberty of mankind.

‘ The

‘ The National Assembly has given the most
 ‘ undeniable testimony of its strong and deep
 ‘ sense of this truth, by the solemn vote which
 ‘ it has directed me to communicate to you.

‘ Accept the assurance of those sentiments
 ‘ with which I have the honour to be,

‘ My Lord,

‘ Your most humble,

‘ And most obedient Servant,

‘ The ARCHBISHOP of AIX,

‘ President of the National Assembly.

*To Lord Stanhope, Chairman
 of the Revolution Society.*

LET us now appeal to every honest and
 unprejudiced Englishman, whether any man,
 or body of men, in any situation, in any capa-
 city, or at any time, ought to be ashamed, or
 afraid, to avow the sentiments expressed in
 the vote of the Revolution Society ; not only
 in respect to France, but of the whole world ?
 The principles contained therein speak for
 themselves. They are founded on a disdain of
 national prejudices, and on the hopes of seeing
 France partake of the blessings of civil and
 religious liberty, *equally* with England ; that
 other nations, following the example of these,
 the two first kingdoms in Europe, may assert

the unalienable rights of mankind ; and that the *world may be free and happy*. Such sentiments want not the support of mere authority, derived from numbers, from personal abilities, from knowledge, from experience or lead in government, which the Author of the *Reflections* seems to call for ; they have an intrinsic value in themselves, which dignify the man, or body of men, who adopt them. Conscious, therefore, of their rectitude, the Society disdain the use of arguments to prove, and look with an eye of pity, on the man, who has not sense to feel, nor honesty to acknowledge their worth.

Their worth was once so felt and acknowledged, not only by the whole nation, but by the then king, that the man would have been ill received, who had dared to question it. He would have shewed himself, in so doing, an idiot in politics, or at least in the politics of that day—for as liberty, and not the establishment of particular houses and families, is the end of the British constitution, government then had the honour and honesty to pursue that end, by firmly maintaining the cause, and universally promoting the spirit of liberty. For the real Revolution Whigs were convinced, that the extension of freedom abroad would tend to its permanency at home ; well knowing,

knowing, that its virtuous energy would catch, and its cause strengthen, as well as the vice and mischief of despotism, by *contact*. Hence it was, that King William, who was a Revolution King, at the head of a people, by whom he had been elected to the throne, and by whom he was bravely defended on it, as such a king ought to be, appeared as the protector, assertor, and revenger of the freedom, not only of his own, but of every other country throughout Europe. For in that period of our history the exertion of the spirit of liberty, however reprobated now, as dangerous to the present government, was as essential to the honour and establishment of the king, as to the security and happiness of the people; and therefore it may be asserted, that both the king and the people of that day would have rejoiced, as the Society have done, in the triumph of liberty and justice over the corruption and despotism of the antient monarchy of France. The Society indeed would not, in that case, have had an opportunity of taking a leading part, and of signalizing themselves above others, in congratulating the National Assembly on their conduct; and had not had the peculiar honour of being insulted by the *Author of the Reflections*. The King and people of Great Britain in general would, as the declared friends of universal freedom,

freedom, have partaken with them of the foam and froth of his oratorical invective, as the whole proceedings of the National Assembly would then have been applauded by the representative majesty, and real sovereignty, of the three kingdoms in their parliaments assembled.

Whoever is of this opinion from his knowledge of the character of those glorious times, which were warm and interested in the cause of freedom; and to which, and not to the present times we are indebted for the civil and religious blessings we now enjoy, will justify the Revolution Society in acting as the then best friends of the protestant religion, and of legitimate government, would have done, had the present astonishing scene, exhibited in France, opened in their days; and by consequence it may be asserted, that the Revolution Society have committed no act, but such as the whole nation would have gloried in during the reign of King William, the greater part of that of Queen Anne, and the whole of the two first Georges. Whoever, therefore, condemns their proceedings, virtually condemns the well-known principles of the best of times; and whoever outrages the regeneration of the Constitution of France, by reprobating the conduct of the National Assembly,

Assembly, insidiously endeavours to vilify and check the spirit of liberty, by which the Revolution of Great Britain was effected, and to which his majesty is indebted for the crown he wears.

An offence of this kind *a real Old Whig* would not have been guilty of, in any mode whatever. He would not, as the *author of the Reflections* has done, have poured forth a torrent of eloquence, however brilliant in the eyes of the public orator, and a few graduates at Oxford, to produce a weeping effect "that the Queen of France, who once glittered like the morning star, full of life, splendour, and joy," did not, on the 6th of October, find her apartments in the Tuilleries in the exactest order;—no more than he would have effected to pity the situation of the Queen of England, the wife of James the Second; when shivering with her child in her arms, in a wet night, under the walls of Lambeth Church. No, he would not have cried out in agony, "Oh! what a Revolution! and what a heart I must have to contemplate without emotion that sight?" He would not have laboured to excite our resentment at the treatment of the King of France, when conducted from one palace to another; and not driven out, but prevented for a time from attempting to quit his capital, and raise
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a civil war, countenanced by foreign powers ; unless, indeed, he had meant to rouse our indignation at James the Second's being forced to quit his palace, and his bed, in the dead of night, and fly in disguise to Feversham ; at his being insulted there, and tumultuously brought back to London ; and at length compelled to abandon his kingdom for ever. The revolt of the French army, and the taking of the Bastile, one of the French king's castles, would not have been clamoured against by him, no more than the mutiny and revolt of the whole British fleet and army, and the taking of the Tower, and other of the royal castles, out of the hands of James's officers ; nor could he, with all the parade and peremptoriness of political dogmatism, resort to the principles of regulated government, in its most exact and peaceable order, for the purpose of shewing, that the National Assembly, though legally convened by the royal authority, and confirmed in its present form by the sanction of the King, is not duly constituted, and has exceeded its power's ; unless, most inimical to the measures by which the British Constitution was established, he meant to call in question the authority of the convention to depose one king, and set up another ; and to controvert the legality of the settlement

settlement afterwards made, in favour of the Elector of Hanover.

The correspondence of the Revolution Society cannot be charged with thus attempting to undermine the foundation of his majesty's title to the crown, by shewing, under pretence of condemning the present French Revolution, that the British Revolution in 1688, on the rightfulness of which his title depends, was unwarrantable and unjust. This the author of the *Reflections* has virtually done; affecting, at the same time, a wonderful zeal for his majesty's government, and what he calls the true principles of the constitution; for he was sensible, that an immediate attack on the Revolution might not have been altogether successful; and that indeed it might, even in these days, have been generally ill received: knowing, as the chief Orator of England, for so Mr. Burke is called by the Archbishop of Aix, "that a common-place declamation, in favour of slavery and tyranny, would be a bold defiance to all the principles of rhetoric;" and that if he had questioned the legality, the justice, the propriety and necessity of what was done by the nation, in open revolt to the hereditary king in 1688, he would have acted at least in an improper and irregular manner,

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and without the *express* authority of the government under which he lives.

Conducting himself, therefore, with consummate artifice, the author of the *Reflections*, not content with endeavouring, under the specious pretence of execrating the behaviour of the French, in this their day of trial, to excite our abhorrence of the principles and proceedings of our ancestors, during their struggle for liberty, seems to attempt, by holding up the correspondence of the Society, as an offence to the state, to betray the minister into an implicit condemnation of the means, and indeed the leading measure, by which the glorious Revolution was brought about. For, if no correspondence whatever, even the most innocent and meritorious, may be opened with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government, under which we live, in what light are we to consider the formal correspondence of those "divers lords spiritual and temporal, and others," who, the Prince of Orange said, had invited him over? Their address was not the act, no more than that of the Revolution Society, of persons assuming a corporate capacity. Their correspondence was not held up as a piece of argument; and no one was so absurd

absurd as to think of examining it as such. It was not a simple congratulation on events that had taken place abroad; it was an urgent invitation, to produce an event of the greatest importance at home; it stood merely on the authority of individuals: none of whom chose to appear before their irritated sovereign, and to acknowledge their deed, though they scorned to disavow it. For James, as Mr. Burke does, wished to know how many they were, and who they were, that had signed that instrument of invitation; not, indeed, that he might judge of the value of their opinions from their personal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, their lead and authority in the state, in order to concur with them; but to prosecute them more ferociously, as *one of the greatest luminaries* of the age, and many others, the most respectable and beneficial members of society, have been lately persecuted at Birmingham, *in proportion to their merit and importance*. For the lords spiritual and temporal, &c. who invited the Prince of Orange hither, were indeed a *Revolution Society*; or rather, as Mr. Burke may, without a sneer, and with great propriety, call, and detest them accordingly, “*a Society for making a Revolution*;” and, for that purpose, not only holding a formal correspondence with the ac-

tual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government, under which they lived, but in direct opposition to, and for the subversion of it.

To do justice, however, to the Author of the *Reflections*, &c. he would, had he lived at that time, have avoided an act of such criminality, as it must appear to him, according to the principles of his late publications. He would not, and indeed could not, consistently with his avowed ideas of *hereditary right*, which was then as legally, and therefore as indefeasibly established, as, he says, it is at present, have had any communication with that association of patriots, as "*Revolution makers*." He must have seen, as he now does, the spirit of liberty in action; and that it was a strong principle at work with some people, though not with himself; that the *wild gas, and fixed air*, as he calls it, of liberty, was plainly broke loose against indefeasible hereditary right, and the absolute sovereignty of monarchs; and therefore would have said, as he now says, that for his own part, he would suspend his judgment, until the first effervescence was a little subsided; until the liquor was cleared, and until he saw something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy substance. That even should a perfect
establish-

establishment of civil and religious liberty be obtained by the exertions of the nation, he could not rejoice thereat, until *he* was *sure* they had *really* received a *blessing* ; and that they were worthy of it. He should, of course, suspend his congratulations on their *new* liberty, until he saw what *use* they made of it, and of the civil and political power derived from it ; whether their free monarchy would know how to render itself great, without endangering their own peace at home, or the internal and external peace of any of their neighbours. He would have hinted, with some plausibility, his doubts, whether it might not be discovered, in the course of time, that by the increased and increasing undue influence of the crown, which the Revolution did not in any manner guard against, “ the forms of a free, and the ends of an arbitrary government, were things not altogether incompatible,” and therefore he might have been alarmed, or pretended to have been so, in order to distress administration, lest the people might, some time or other, be artfully worked upon to endeavour to establish the one, *in all cases whatever*, over some part of their fellow-subjects, by means of the other, and thereby render themselves unworthy of the liberty they enjoyed. He would by consequence

sequence have said, that he should wait to see, whether the people, assuming "the vices and follies of kings," did not usurp, tyrannize and plunder, wherever they were able, in the east as well as the west; and, lost to all sense of liberty and of christianity, not only barter away their own freedom in the basest manner, but practise and justify, with the greatest effrontery, and the most hardened hearts, the right of purchasing, seizing, and reducing to slavery the bodies of their fellow creatures.

But he would have told them plainly, if he ever dealt plainly in matters of religion, that he could not congratulate them on their having preserved themselves from what they called a persecuting religion, until he was *sure* they would not be persecutors themselves, even of those, by whose concurrence, and by whose self-sacrifice, they were enabled to secure their own religious peace; and that the church of England, infected, like that of Rome, by worldly interests and worldly passions, would not become as virulent in its turn against those, who dissented from her; and that too, not because they did not discharge the Christian and social duties, but because they carried their principles farther than was convenient to certain men, who had
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an interest in asserting, that the establishment and maintenance of the church, in all the pomp, power, and majesty of the world, was essentially necessary for the support of the humility, the truth, and the simplicity of the Christian religion in England.

A Plain man, as you call yourself, but Sophister as you are, is it by asking what use the French will make of their liberty; and whether it will ultimately be a blessing to them, that you endeavour not only to check our congratulations on the new freedom of France; but even to give the British people a dread and detestation of that, which was established here a century ago? Sophistical, however, as your doubts are, with respect to the matter for which they are suggested, they afford an additional plain proof, not only that you would not have been the most active in the glorious work of the last age; but that you cannot, consistent with your present doctrines, feel the most perfect satisfaction on its completion, in 1745. For a man of your political wisdom and caution cannot, even now, take upon yourself to determine, whether the national prosperity, which the Revolution has apparently, and in the opinion of every admirer of it, has really produced, will ultimately prove a blessing, either to the king or
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the people ; and, indeed, of such a species is your political prudence, that it is inconceivable, how you can rejoice in any public event whatever, as it is impossible for you to know all the consequences, it may ultimately produce. Should you, therefore, oppose any parliamentary congratulations on the late Prussian marriage, which, like other marriages, no one can say, how it may turn out, will surprize none, but those, whom you have convinced, by your present seeming prostitution and declared apostacy, that you never mean to oppose against any measure of the court. That you would, had you been a person of any note at the time of his majesty's accession, have objected to an address of felicitation, on his attainment of royal *power* is certain ; for, applying with as much propriety to kings, as to the people, one of your political aphorisms, you would then have said, with a grave aspect, and as if

— deep on your front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care,"

“ That a considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the *USE*, which is made of *power*, and particularly of so trying a thing as *new power to new PERSONS*, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions they have little or no experience ; and in situations
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where those, who appear the most stirring in the scene, may possibly not be the real movers."

Had the people however, at that time, not regarded your caution, which probably they would not, as being somewhat too refined and ingenious for the occasion ; and, as having the complexion of a fraud, and the air of a political stratagem, practised for the purpose of bringing on a distrust of the new government, you may, notwithstanding, have perhaps an opportunity of following that other rule of caution, which you have condemned the Revolution Society for having violated in their correspondence. Should, for instance, his majesty, forgiving and forgetting, for some political purpose or other, all your declamations against his person and government, and exultations at the defeats and miseries, which have affected either one or the other, think proper, for reasons best known to himself, to confer on you a peerage, and other places and *secret pensions*, you may, and must, consistently with your present principles, refuse his offer ; or, at least, cannot be so inconsiderate as to return him thanks for his bounty, which you will tell him plainly, you are not *sure* will turn out a *real blessing* ; for that you are not *sure*, it will render you either wiser or

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better

better, by checking that vain confidence, which almost always fails in the trial, and teaching you not to rely too much on your own understanding, or be filled with a presumption, not becoming a Christian man in his stability and rectitude*. You will, by consequence, advise his majesty to reflect seriously with himself, whether it was likely, or rather certain, that you should make a good *use* of the dignity, power, and emoluments, proposed to be conferred on you; and of course whether he unquestionably knew, either from your writings, your conduct, or from any one about you, your real religious and political principles; whether he, or any man, can depend on you, after having abandoned, in a rage, and without remorse, "a Society" which, you once said, "could not be kept without advantage, or deserted without shame." You might tell him, "that you knew your own weakness in all respects, as much as any enemy you had, and had once endeavoured to take security against it," by entering into, and continuing for twenty or thirty years together, in an habit of life, and communication of councils, with the most virtuous and public-spirited men of the age, whatever opinion

* Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

to the contrary his majesty might have of them ; that, in truth, you could not now depend upon yourself, having, by breaking from that society, and becoming a solitary individual, given up this, the *only* method, which has ever been found effectual to preserve any man against the corruption of nature and example*. That you knew not the *use* you might make of political power, which nature certainly had not qualified you to possess, for the promotion of the happiness of others, as you must acknowledge that you felt in yourself a complexional despotism, and therefore could not boast, as you knew and had said Mr. Fox could boast, " of the greatest possible degree of that natural moderation, which is the best corrective of political power," a power, which your parental education, under a practitioner of the law, would, it must be confessed, after what you had said of the French attorneys, of necessity lead you to turn to the advancement of your private interests ; and which your subsequent studies at St. Omer's could not give you just notions of ; and that indeed you was fearful, snatched as you had been suddenly, as it were by enchantment, from the humblest rank of

* Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

subordination, you might be still more intoxicated than you had been, by an unprepared greatness ; and in a word, that you could not sincerely thank him, in justice to yourself, for any favour he might bestow, as you was not sure it would not prove rather a curse than a blessing, by rendering you contemptible to the whole world ; affording, as you had the greatest reason to think it must, an unquestionable proof, that the honours, distinctions, and emoluments of a court, were the constant objects of your variable consistency ; and that preferment, by whatever various and contradictory means secured, was always the unity of your end.

Not, however, to press this matter farther, it must be acknowledged, that whatever language, and whatever conduct, the Author of the *Reflections* may hold in such circumstances, the Revolution Society certainly trust, that France will make at least as good a use of her liberty as England has done of that, which was confirmed to her a century ago ; that she will establish her present constitution with less treacherous and bloody opposition, than that, which was established by the British Revolution, most shamefully and most iniquitously met with ; that her illustrious legislators, forming not a partial and imperfect, but
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an equal and pure representation of the people, may continue to be, as they are at present, a National Assembly ; and secure their constitution, in the surest manner, against the corrupting influence of the crown, in order that it may for ages be an honour and blessing to her, and an example to the whole world ; of which there is a fairer prospect and a greater certainty, than could appear to our ancestors, at the time of the Revolution, in favour of the Constitution, then established in England. It was in this view of things—for the benevolent rejoice at the probability and appearance of good to others, without affecting to be *plus sages que les sages*, by prying too deeply into futurity—that the Society offered their congratulation, and opened their correspondence with the National Assembly ; the liberal and humane nature of which shews, as clearly, as the supercilious language held by the Author of the *Reflections*, that he has no manner of communication with the Revolution Society.

For, calumniated as their correspondence has been, it does not breathe the spirit of war and universal carnage ; it invites no foreign force to invade this or any other kingdom ; nor does it exult, that any monarch is *hurled* from his throne ; and so far from complaining

plaining of the follies of government, and the vices of the court, as was done by the *Author of the Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents*, it seems to acknowledge and glory in the general happiness, by congratulating with the utmost liberality the French, on the prospect they have in a *common participation with them* in the blessings of civil and religious liberty. Can such a correspondence, which concluded with wishing, that what was doing in France might, by a general reformation in the government of Europe, make the world free and happy, be offensive to a generous and virtuous people? Impossible! It is, we find, however, offensive to an individual; it is offensive to Mr. Burke, whose temper seems to be fretted and soured by such benevolence; and therefore, pretending to be the greatest statesman, and the most moral and religious man of the age, which he certainly is, if questioning the political, moral, and religious conduct of others is a proof of pre-eminence, he endeavours to incite the same evil-temper in others, and to provoke the resentment of government against the proceedings of the Revolution Society, as composed of dissenters.

Unhappy man! had he been instructed in, and was now disposed to practise the benevolence of the Christian faith, he would have
allowed

allowed, that the substantial charity, expressed in this correspondence, was sufficient to cover all its supposed formal defects; and even as a statesman, which he affects to be, he might have learnt from one, who was a sound politician, and an honest man*, (for he scorned to flatter his master's arbitrary disposition) that there are some things so excellent in their nature, that however irregularly done, they cannot be spoiled by the manner in which they are accomplished; and as a statesman too he would not, unless he had been one of those whom he formerly condemned, as having too exquisite a sense of public danger, have been so ingenious and refined in discovering disobedience and disaffection to his majesty's government in the expressions of peace and good-will to all mankind. He would by consequence have reprobated the invention of constructive crimes, and the tricks and practices of penal statutes, exerted against the Protestant Dissenters; for of such he erroneously supposes the Revolution Society is totally composed, as much as he did the exercise of them against those of the Romish religion.

He would now say, as he once said, "There are men, and many, I trust there are, (Oh!

* Sir William Temple.

that

that he would prove himself one of them!) who, out of love to their country and their kind, would torture their invention to find excuses for the mistakes of their brethren; and who, to stifle dissensions, would construe even doubtful appearances with the utmost favour." He would plainly tell the minister, "That the proscribing the citizens by denominations and general descriptions, dignified by the name of reason of state, and security for constitutions and commonwealths, is nothing better at bottom, than the miserable invention of an ungenerous ambition, which would fain hold the sacred trust of power without any of the virtues, or any of the energies, that give a title to it," and would honestly declare to the churchmen, that this was "a receipt of policy, made up of a detestable compound of malice, cowardice, and sloth." This, and much more, he might now urge, as he did some few years ago, in his speech at Bristol, in order to wipe away the suspicions long, too long, entertained of those who profess the Romish faith. But nothing of this kind, it seems, can be expected from him in favour of the Revolution Society, as an association of *Protestant* dissenters. He, *Turk-like*, cannot even give them, no more than the people of Birmingham can, the *salam*, or the salute and word

word of peace; it being evident, whatever predilection he may have for the Romish church, and whatever his faith may really be, he is no PROTESTANT *Dissenter*; and has no great respect for what he calls, in his speech recommending conciliation with the colonies, "the PROTESTANTISM of the PROTESTANT religion."

It is not, therefore, to find excuses for the supposed mistakes of men of this denomination, that the author of the *Reflections* will torture his invention; or in order to stifle dissensions in the state, and appease animosities, artfully excited against them, will construe doubtful appearances, with the utmost favour; on the contrary, *his* love to his country and *his* kind, such is its nature, leads him to torture his invention, redundant as it is, to discover offences in the most innocent and meritorious actions of the *Protestant* dissenters, in whatever character they may appear, and urge a general proscription of them, under the pretence of reason of state, and security to the constitution and commonwealth of Great Britain, for this purpose, not content with endeavouring to provoke the resentment of government against the Revolution Society, for the intercourse, they have had with the National Assembly, as being, he says, at least, improper

improper and irregular in itself.—He now makes the subject and the object of that intercourse, which was merely an address of congratulation, criminal in the highest degree. The Society is now arraigned by him as guilty of the most enormous treason, that can be committed: TREASON AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION. They are publicly and directly charged as a set of conspirators, that have incorporated themselves for the subversion of nothing short of the *whole* Constitution, and utter overthrow of the body of its laws, civil and ecclesiastical; and, with them, of the whole system of its manners, in favour of the new Constitution, and of the modern usages of the French nation*.

To give a formal answer to this heavy accusation, made without any manner of proof, and therefore apparently suggested by maliciousness, would be to suppose, there was any one man in the kingdom of so weak a head, or of so depraved a heart, as to give any credit to it; or in the least to countenance the man, who makes it.

There might, indeed, have been some ground for a charge of this nature, had the Society originally formed itself, and had laboured from its first institution to the present time, to re-

Appeal, p. 8.

establish

establish any thing like the antient aristocracy ; which rivalling the crown, and insulting the people, governed both one and the other with insufferable arrogance ; or had a man of no account in life, but of great presumption, having some how or other gained admittance into their Assemblies, imposed upon them by his eloquence, (however void it might be of a proportionable degree of wisdom) or harassed them by the over-bearingness of his temper, to adopt a plan of this sort ; it would have amounted to a direct and unquestionable proof of their intentions, to subvert nothing short of the *whole* of the Constitution, and utterly to overthrow the whole body of its laws, and with them the whole system of its present manners, in favour of the antient feudal forms, and the worst usages of the most ignorant times. In this case, suspicion and distrust, both on the part of the king and the people, must of course have attended them, as long as such a man had any intercourse with them ; whatever language they might hold, and whatever shape they might take, to secure the unity of their end.

It is to be hoped, however, that the most inveterate enemy of the Revolution Society, whoever he may be, will acquit them, at least, of this daring attempt to subvert the Con-

stitution by the establishment of an oligarchy, the worst of all aristocratical governments ; by which the monarch and the monarchy itself would have been eventually annihilated, or been rendered basely and servilely subservient to the low personal pride and ambitious interests of a few. That an attempt of this kind has been made is not unknown to the calumniator of the Revolution Society, for this was the avowed object of all his writings for a series of years ; the adoption of which having been ever insidiously recommended by him to the people, as absolutely necessary “ to prevent things from being hurried into all the rage of civil violence, or sinking into the dead repose of despotism*.” This was in particular the direct design of the famous East India Bill, of which he was undoubtedly the chief promoter ; and which, if that bill had been enacted into a law, would have been established by the instrumentality of parliament. The dissenters were then, at least, decided in support of his majesty’s crown and dignity ; their influence at the general election being confessedly felt, and acknowledged by the minister, in opposition to this anti-monarchical project. As therefore their conduct on that occasion is not, and cannot be forgiven by

* Causes of the present Discontents.

Mr.

Mr. Burke, so it is hoped, his majesty will not forget it ; but will recollect for their honour ; or, at least, for his own honour and security, who it is, that now accuses them with being the enemies of monarchy, and subverters of the constitution.

Unluckily for the present accusation, and the personal character of the accuser, the offence, which has been taken against the Society results not from any supposed enmity in the members of it to the constitution, established by the Revolution ; but to their adherence and attachment to it ; to their zeal in preserving its spirit, and maintaining its principles in all their purity and vigour ; this, at least, it may be asserted, is the ground of the animosity, expressed against them by the author of the *Reflections*, with most unmeasured outrage. For, being in the habit of arraigning the conduct of others, originally contracted by his constant inveighing against his majesty's government, we find he can now draw up an indictment against denominations and whole bodies of men, and, indeed, against an whole people, millions of his fellow-creatures, whose feelings and whose exertions in the cause of liberty, he can insult with a virulence, that would have disgraced even the foul-mouthed Sir Edward Coke.

But

But whom will not the author of the *Reflections* insult? And what society, civil or amical, will not such a man endeavour to confound? who now does not think, though he once thought it "the most dreadful of all offences, not only towards the present generation, but to all the future, to make the minutest breach in that association of men," which he formerly considered as the "great conservatory of free principles." The breach, indeed, that he has made, is evidently minute, but it is as great a breach, as it is possible, that he, a solitary individual, could make. It is an abruption from, and a disclaimer to act with the best men, the times afford, "on the union of whom, he was once thoroughly persuaded the last hopes of preserving the spirit of the English constitution depend*."

Whether he was ever cordially united with his party, either on civil or religious principles; whether his ideas of his own importance have been lately shocked at the loss of the domineering and dictatorial power, which he long exercised over them; or that the firm establishment of the ministry, by the recovery of the king, has struck him with the despair, which, he knows, is so very apt to fall on

* Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

those whom a violence of character, and a mixture of ambitious views, do not support through a long, painful and unsuccessful struggle; may perhaps be enquired into by others*. It is sufficient for us to observe, in order to shew that he acts under no fixed principle, that he does not believe, as he says the Romans did; and which he has laid down as an established maxim, that private honor is a great foundation of public trust; and that friendship is no mean step towards patriotism; † nor does he, though he calls himself an *Old Whig*, act as he says the Old Whigs did in the time of Queen Anne, who believed ‡ that the only proper method of rising into power was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity; “for patriotism was not considered by them as a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or the dearest connections in private life, and of all the virtues that rise from those relations.” The present Old Whig of the day acts otherwise, attached to the prejudices, on which civil and ecclesiastical establishments are founded, he reprobates the prejudices, which support antient friendships,

* Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.—† Thoughts on the present Discontents.—‡ Ibid.

from

from which we find he can revolt, by his impeachment of the principles and conduct of Mr. Fox, even at the time that he gives him the most enviable character, both in public and private life; and by his contemptuous and outrageous arraignment of the whole Whig Party, notwithstanding he once suggested to others, "how little conducive it was to any rational purpose to lower its reputation."

With respect to his present shameless and senseless indictment, it is obviously founded on the Congratulatory Address of the Revolution Society to the National Assembly; for this is the only act which this sort of corporation, as it is called, had passed, when his rage first burst out against it. He asserts, indeed, in a subsequent publication, that the Society was formed for the subversion of the constitution, although he had before acknowledged, such is his consistency, "that in the ancient principles and conduct of the Club, so far at least as they were declared, he saw nothing to which he, or any other man, could possibly take exception*." The Society, therefore, which existed long before the regeneration of the French government, was not, and

* Vide Reflections, &c.

could

could not be formed for the purpose of taking any factious interest in the present proceedings of France; and whether they have done it for the utter overthrow of the body of our laws, civil and ecclesiastical, must be proved by something more satisfactory than assertion, and by more justifiable means, than the imputation of criminality, grounded on construction; for it is to the horrid doctrine of constructive treasons their accuser resorts, to prove their intention to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom: a species of treason, though happily unknown to our laws, the partizans of arbitrary power have ever had recourse to, however condemned by justice and humanity, as iniquitous in its principles, and mischievous in its consequences; there being no word or action, however innocent, which may not be transmuted by the rankness, of a malevolent imagination, into the blackest crime; and thereby the lives, the fortunes, and the honour, not only of particular denominations and bodies of men, but of every man in the nation, must, being no longer protected by justice and humanity, be exposed to the rancour of popular prejudice, and to the rage of merciless despotism. This is evidently the object of the charge brought against the Revolution Society, whose Address

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of Congratulation to the National Assembly, on the destruction of their former tyrannical government, is weakly and wickedly considered by their accuser, as implying a desire, intention and endeavour, in them, to subvert the whole of the British constitution. Weak and wicked as this position may appear to most, the assertion of it, as an unquestionable fact, was necessary to support his charge of treason against the Society; and to afford him the opportunity of displaying the nature and extent of his genius, in malevolently attempting to shew, that their Address, however apparently innocent and meritorious in itself, is an overt act of their imputed conspiracy against the state.

It is not for us at present to laugh at the absurdity of this mode of reasoning; or to treat it with that marked contempt and abhorrence, which its folly and maliciousness deserve. Let us rather give it its full and intended force, in order, that his majesty may not be insidiously led to dishonour and accuse himself of the highest offence to the state on the same principles, on which he is taught to suspect and condemn the Revolution Society, as enemies to the constitution. Let us, therefore, that he may see and avoid the snare laid for him, allow, that no one, in any situation, can congratulate

gratulate another on the completion of any act, or attainment of any object, however peculiarly profitable to that particular person, without its being understood, he approves of all the means, by which it was acquired; be supposed, at the same time, to be inclined to imitate it in all its circumstances; and place himself precisely in a similar situation. For this doctrine, laid down as "a general principle, which," our author says, "cannot be debauched or corrupted by interest and caprice;" is as applicable to one person as to another, and therefore must necessarily implicate the king himself; and, by consequence, prove Mr. Burke to be as artful a libeller of his majesty, as he is an outrageous reviler of the Revolution Society; unless, indeed, it can be imagined he is totally ignorant, that his majesty was one of the first monarchs in Europe who congratulated the Autocratrix of Russia on her mounting the throne of her husband and her son; who felicitated his majesty of Sweden on the subversion of the former and ancient government of his country; and exulted at the extent of power, which the Stadtholder, not long since, acquired, by the invasion and assistance of a foreign force. It must, at the same time, be supposed, for his justification, that he is totally uninformed of the means by

which these regal "*Revolution-makers*," (for it seems, that kings, and those who affect to be kings, are as much innovators, reformers, and revolutionists, in their way, as any people whatever) attained the stations and the power, which they possess; or he must otherwise stand convicted; on his own principles, and in his own judgment, of designedly imputing to his majesty the desire, intention, and the endeavour to subvert the fundamental laws of the land, and the whole system of its manners, in favour of the new constitutions, and the modern usages of the Dutch, the Swedish, and the Russian nations; and to approve of all the means, detestable as they appear to many, by which they have been established; for his majesty certainly congratulated the *Revolutionists* of those countries, on the success of their enterprizes, with more pomp and parade, than the Revolution Society felicitated the National Assembly on their subversion of despotism in France.

Thus it is, that the calumniator of the Revolution Society, after having, throughout the whole of his *Philippizing Philipps*, artfully outraged the proceedings of the National Assembly, on principles derogatory to the honour, and inimical to the establishment even of the Reformation and Revolution in this country,

try, seems most insidiously to endeavour, under a covered attack, to give us wrong and mischievous impressions even of his majesty's political proceedings, and this too, at the very moment he affects, for the first time in his life, to applaud the principles of either his foreign or domestic government. Surely, he who in this manner labours, by every possible artifice, to create distrust between a king and any part of his subjects, by throwing suspicions on the innocent and meritorious conduct of the one, and that too, in a mode that must necessarily disgrace and criminate the formal political acts of the other, must ever be distrusted by both. Should, however, either party be so deceived by, as to trust, him again, it must be that, and that party only, QUI VULT DECIPI.

For it is not easy to be imagined, how any man can be imposed upon by an argument maintained so illogically, as Mr. Burke maintains, that to congratulate another on his conduct implies an intention to imitate it in all its circumstances; unless governed by prejudice, like Mr. Burke, he preferred it to reason, and that "*his genius*," like *Burke's* too, "*being at random*," he was not only ignorant of, but incapable of, the art of reasoning, it however, cannot be doubted, that the fallacy of
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of this logic, when applied to his majesty's congratulations to foreign powers, will be acknowledged by all; and that Mr. Burke himself would protest against the absurdity and maliciousness of it, if applied to his own exultation on the king's being hurled from his throne; for, though he might rejoice, and congratulate himself upon the probability of an event of that kind, as it might have secured the unity of his end; yet it cannot but be supposed, in charity to him; he would have been somewhat scrupulous in prompting it. However this may be, the truth is, the Society have never expressed an intention to imitate the conduct of the National Assembly; and that such intention cannot, with any sobriety, be collected from their Congratulatory Address. Should, however, such intention be entertained by them, now it is put into their heads; and they should resolve to declare it openly, they might perhaps chuse, in order that their enemies might not cavil at it, to express themselves in the very words of this great enemy Mr. Burke, himself; and, therefore, adopting his language, when he proposed his pompous but trifling and ineffectual plan for the security of the independance of parliament, and reformation in the offices of government, the Society might say to the whole

whole nation, and more they need not say, for every good purpose: "THE FRENCH HAVE IMITATED US, LET US *through them* IMITATE OURSELVES; OURSELVES IN OUR BETTER AND HAPPIER DAYS."

Should it now appear, after having thus considered the whole of the charges, brought by Mr. Burke, against the Revolution Society, that the transmission of their Congratulatory Address to the National Assembly cannot be justly held up as offensive to government, on account of its supposed impropriety; and that the address itself is no proof, that the Society was formed, and is now conspiring to subvert nothing *short* of the whole of the constitution of the kingdom; and moreover, that these charges come with the worst possible grace from Mr. Burke of all men living; it is trusted, that the important correspondence, which this Address has given occasion to, with various societies of the friends of freedom, in every part of France, will be found, when offered to the perusal of the public, which it is intended to be, not only worthy of the Society, as a society of freemen, and of faithful and affectionate subjects; but honourable to the British people at large, as the original assertors of, and as having afforded an asylum to freedom in Europe; for it may be maintained, without
any

any fear of contradiction; that nothing will be found therein, on the part of the citizens of France; but admiration of the glorious conduct of this country a century ago; and an earnest wish to live in amity with it; and on the part of the members of the Society, a constitutional submission to government, and a zeal, a laudable zeal, in the opinion of the real friends to the House of Brunswick, in support of the Constitution itself, in its spirit, as well as in its letter, and as it was established by the Revolution.

Unless, indeed, it might be discovered by malignity, and asserted by a treacherous sycophancy to the times, that the Society's exultation on the French having shaken off the odious yoke of despotism, and recovered the Rights of Man; is a criminal insult on his majesty's crown and dignity; and that it is a manifest injury and wrong to the British people, for any one subject to rejoice that their neighbours are now *partakers with them*, in the invaluable blessings of civil and religious liberty; on a supposition that the extension of freedom is alarming to his majesty's government; and that a liberality of sentiment and universal benevolence are incompatible, with a love to our country; and in short, that both king and people must be ruined, when-

whenever the day shall come, that Great-Britain and France, the two most enlightened kingdoms of the world, convinced of the folly of wars, and laying aside all jealousy, shall embrace one another, and form a fraternal and intimate union ; not for the purposes of avarice and conquest, but to spread the knowledge of human rights, to extend the blessings of justice and liberty, and PROMOTE PEACE ON EARTH, AND GOOD WILL AMONG MEN.

For such, it must me be confessed, however odious and criminal they may appear to some, are the principles of the derided religion of the Protestant Dissenters ; and such are the political objects, which manifest themselves throughout the whole of the correspondence of the Revolution Society ; principles and objects which, as they can afford no pleasure but to those, who have an honest zeal for the cause of liberty, and the virtuous happiness of mankind, are most naturally vilified by *Mr. Edmund Burke* ; who proves, and it is the only point, that he actually does prove, as it is, perhaps, the only thing he meant to prove, in order to secure the unity of his end at court, that he is no Protestant Dissenter ; and that he is not, directly or indirectly, concerned in the proceedings of the Revolution Society.

I

No,

No, Mr. Burke is certainly not a *Protestant* Dissenter, nor is he a member of the Revolution Society. He has clearly manifested, that he is neither the one nor the other, by his rancorously urging the purification, or rather the destruction of the present Constitution of France, founded on the Rights of Man, with fire and blood ; and by preaching up with all the virulent bigotry, though, it is trusted, not with the effective eloquence of *Peter*, the hermit, an inhuman crusade, in the support of civil and religious establishments, because they are founded on antient prejudices, and inciting a general carnage ; for the accomplishment of which, retaliation and revenge, in violation of the first principles of the Christian Religion, are most rhetorically recommended to all the Princes of Europe ; and the hell-hounds of war are to be let loose, on all sides, uncoupled and unmuzzled*, for mutual massacre and universal destruction.

Surely, it may be observed, for the sake of religion in general, that it is impossible, that the Author of the *Reflections*, &c. should have an apostolical mission for thus attempting to provoke a violation of the laws of nature and nations ; as it ought to be asserted, for the

* Letter to the Member of the National Assembly.

honour

honour of his majesty, that he has not a diplomatic mission, or that any countenance whatever has been given him by the government, under which he lives, to outrage, as he has done, the actual government of a foreign nation.

But let us turn our thoughts from this bloody project, which shocks humanity ; and let us not dwell on the maliciousness of its policy any longer, than to remark, that such are the morals and religion of the sarcastic reviler of all the Christian charities, so eminent in that excellent man, the late DR. PRICE ; and such is the natural or political depravity of the *Caluminator* of the REVOLUTION SOCIETY.

THE END.

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